

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Japan Accepts NOAA Sanitary Certificate for US Fresh Oyster Exports

Country: Japan

Post: Tokyo

Report Category: Fishery Products, Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards - Certification

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Report Highlights:

Japan has accepted the sanitary certificate issued by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for fresh oysters exported by eligible U.S. entities. U.S. oyster exporters must be on the Interstate Certified Shellfish Shippers List and meet Japan's food sanitation standards for oysters for raw consumption.

General Information:

On July 2, 2020, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) notified Japan's quarantine station officials that Japan has accepted the use of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) sanitary certificate for U.S. fresh oyster exports to Japan ([How to Handle Imported Oysters for Raw Consumption](#)). The notification follows Japan's May 15, 2020 [acceptance](#) of Washington State's sanitary oyster certificate ([JA2020-0109](#)) and specifies that the use of the NOAA oyster sanitary certificate is limited to fresh oyster exports from Oregon, Washington, Connecticut and New York states. MHLW has instructed quarantine station officials to verify that U.S. fresh oyster exporters are registered in the [Interstate Certified Shellfish Shippers List \(ICSSL\)](#).

Japan's acceptance of the NOAA and Washington State sanitary certificates follows its June 13, 2018 revision of Japan's [Food Sanitation Act](#)¹ to require sanitary certificates for oyster imports destined for raw consumption from June 1, 2020. On November 7, 2019, MHLW amended the [Ordinance for Enforcement of the Food Sanitation Act](#)² to add a list of new requirements for the oyster sanitary certificate ([JA2019-0200](#)).

Japanese Requirements for Oysters for Raw Consumption:

Fresh oyster imports to Japan must (i) meet the [Specific Standard for Oysters for Raw Consumption](#) (available in Japanese only) based on [Article 11 of the Food Sanitation Act](#) and (ii) comply with [standard values](#) (available in Japanese only) for paralytic shellfish poison (PSP) and diarrheal shellfish poison (DSP) based on [Article 6 of the Food Sanitation Act](#). Failure to meeting these criteria may result in rejection of shipment. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries established PSP and DSP risk management and inspection [guidelines](#) for bivalves (available in Japanese only).

Although the 1962 U.S.-Japan [Shellfish Sanitation Agreement](#) recognizes uniform sanitation principles, due to Japan's additional food safety requirements for oysters under the Food Sanitation Act, MHLW must approve oyster-harvesting areas prior to export. Prior to granting approval for a specific water area, MHLW's Food Inspection and Safety Division must receive inspection data on the total coliform group count for the water area and a water area map. As of July 7, 2020, MHLW has approved fresh oyster exports from all water areas of Oregon (MHLW notification No.117 on May 29, 1996), Washington and Connecticut (MHLW notification No.289 on December 26, 1996), and New York (MHLW notification No.11190002 on November 19, 2004).

To Request Japan-Approved Sanitary Certificate for Oyster Exports, please contact:

NOAA Fisheries Seafood Inspection Program

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/contact-directory/contact-your-local-seafood-inspection-office>

Washington State Department of Health, Export Certificates

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Shellfish/CommercialShellfish/Export>

¹ Article 11-(2)

² Article 11-2-(3)

Attachments:

[NOAA Oyster Sanitary Certificate.pdf](#)

[Washington State Oyster Export Certificate Sample.pdf](#)